

USING YOUR PERSONAL NETWORK TO SELL CCTLD DOMAINS – WITH ROB KAAAY



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Episode 391



DOMAINSHERPA.COM

Michael Cyger: You know when you want to get a deal done but you feel like it's just too far away and it's never going to happen? Today's Sherpa turned a \$25,000 offer into a sale when the seller wanted more than \$100,000. And he closed a \$132,000 sale when the seller would have taken \$50,000. We go into all the details of how he made these phenomenal ccTLD deals happen. Stay tuned to learn more.

I have three sponsor messages before we get into today's show.

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Michael: Hey, Sherpa Network. Thank you so much for joining me today. My name is Michael Cyger. I'm the publisher of DomainSherpa.com, the website where you can learn how to become a successful domain name investor or entrepreneur directly from the experts.

I met today's Sherpa in person at NamesCon, domain name conference in January 2017. Here's a picture of us. I mentioned that because it's important to emphasize that business is done through relationships. And relationships are most quickly formed by meeting people in person. And we're gonna learn just how important personal relationships are for business success by looking at two recent brokered sales that were done by today's Sherpa.

I'd like to welcome Robert Kaay, Chief Domain Broker at Domain Broker Australia, DBR.com.au. Welcome, Robert.

Robert: Hi, Michael. Hey, guy.

Michael: Good. So you've recently closed two deals in the .com.au, ccTLD, which are country code top-level domains. What were the domain names and sale prices?

Robert: Yeah. I closed PD.com.au, that was for AUD 42,500, and Fetch.com.au. I sold that one AUD 132,000. I think that's USD 100,300.

Michael: Okay. All right. Cool. We'll just refer to them as like just the dollars. And for the rest of the show, we'll just assume that it's in Australian dollars so we don't have to worry about translations or anything because my math isn't that good.

So you know some fantastic domain names. PD, as in Paul David, .com.au, a two-lettered...like two letters are just great in any top-level domain. And then Fetch, what a phenomenal brand for any type of company. What's interesting is that in both of these cases, you either saved your client, the buyer, money or got more money for the seller than they anticipated. How much so in each case?

So for PD.com.au, you sold it for \$42,500. How much was the initial offer from the seller?

Robert: The initial offer from the seller was six figures. He originally wanted like \$100,000.

Michael: A hundred thousand dollars, yeah?

Robert: And that's why...Yeah, for the name. I can go into more detail about that in a minute but also...

Michael: Yeah, I just want to bound this.

Robert: ...I roughly...

Michael: So you got it down from 100,000 down to 42,500 for your client?

Robert: Yeah. And I represented the buyer in that case, yeah.

Michael: Right. And then for Fetch.com.au, you represented the seller and you got them 100...the final sale price was \$132,000. What was his reserve on that one? How much would he have taken?

Robert: He told me he was willing to take \$50,000.

Michael: Fifty thousand? Wow!

Robert: That one, yeah. We made [inaudible 00:03:07]. That being said, he knew that a...he'd been holding on to it for over 15 years, [inaudible 00:03:16]. And so he...that was his kind of...he was gonna tuck his head between his legs and say, "Okay, 50,000." That's, you know what I mean, like he wanted us to play it, to give it to the right person who was willing to pay the right amount of money for it, yeah.

Michael: Right. And you know I think there are buyers or there are sellers every single day that have great domain names like a single word and they're like, "Yeah, I would take 50,000 or I'd take 100,000 for it." And it's easy to do those quick deals and get the quick cash but using a broker, and we're gonna dig in to...You know, this isn't a show about just hire a broker and he or she will get you more money. We're gonna get into how you actually got the seller more money for that domain name.

So if anybody else is watching the show and they have that domain name and they want to do it themselves or, you know, somebody else wants to learn to become a broker and they wanna get some insights in your tactics,

all those are gonna be shared on today's show, which is why I'm so excited about it. So we'll dig into those.

But first, I wanna learn, you know, before heading to NamesCon, I really haven't crossed paths with you much before, and so I wanna learn a little more about your background. How long have you been brokering domain names?

Robert: I would say, professionally, about 18 months. So I'm kind of a newcomer. I started two and a half years ago but that first year was, you know...what's the word...like jumping in the deep end. I've actually wrote a blog about it on a big Australian domain broker, domainer site called Domainer.com.au, about my first year as a domainer. Ned, the owner of that site, asked me to write about my first year and I think that's still up on his site.

And I mentioned that I spent AUD 100,000 of my own money during that first year basically making mistakes and registering silly names and finding the good ones. And I have now sold a few of them and made some of that money back but I made a lot of mistakes. And that's the thing about me. I don't know how different people learn. But some people, you know, get taught and do kind of courses or get a mentor or take some stuff, I kind of jumped in the deep end and made mistakes. I don't know if it's a good or a bad thing, but it seems to be a fast learning curve by making the mistakes yourself. So that's kind of just how I do things.

So, but yes, after that first year, the last 18 months, I kind of knew what I was doing and now I'm at a point where I'm making these big sales. And now I'm confident with that I'm doing. Yeah.

Michael: Nice. And I see from your LinkedIn profile that you also have experience in IT services. So, you know, domain names weren't a far stretch from the IT services that you, I think, still provide today. Is that correct?

Robert: Yeah. I have a couple of businesses that do like data center, environmental control and drone services, so asset inspection with drones, which is a whole new industry and it's just kind of just taking off, pardon the pun. But...

Michael: Yeah, and you own a great domain name with that one, don't you?

Robert: Yeah. I own drone.com.au. That's the thing, when I'm selling these names and making these commissions, I'm actually investing that money back in domain name. That's how much I believe in the power of a good domain name.

Michael: Yeah. But what I found most interesting from your LinkedIn profile was that you're once a songwriter and you tour...and you were a touring artist with Columbia Records, Sony BMG. What...you played guitar?

Michael: I was the bass guitarist and that's actually what I did in my 20s. I was a professional musician. So the biggest thing I had going for me in my 20s, apart from playing bass guitar and writing music, was I was so into the business and the branding of the band. And I was actually the manager of the band and I started up an indie label with a lawyer friend of mine called Andrew in Perth. And that taught me so much about building a brand and finding the right name for the band, and...

Michael: What was the name of the band?

Robert: ...building a...Full Scale.

Michael: Full Scale?

Robert: F-U-L-L Scale, yeah, Full Scale like full scale attack or something like that. Yeah, that was interesting. But I had to, as a manager, I had to build the brand up and turn it into something that someone wanted to buy. And I'm

still using those skills today with domain names. Finding the right name like a band name and then branding it the point where someone wants to buy it.

And then long story short, with the band, we eventually turned it into something big enough that all five big major labels in the year 2003 flew us over to America, one at a time, and wined and dined us and offered us deals. And we just, we picked the best one, not necessarily the one with the most amount of money. And the deal was...it was a quarter-of-a-million-plus deal anyway that we ended up signing with. And I now lived in Hollywood for a couple of years and we toured America on it. Yeah. I learned a lot.

Michael: Wow! Yeah, see, I wish I would've known that when we met in person at NamesCon because I wanna ask you all about all the groupies and the parties and everything else but like not appropriate during the show, totally appropriate in person. So next time we meet up...

Robert: Probably NamesCon

Michael: NamesCon next year, yeah. That's on my to-do list is to chat to you about that.

Robert: Yeah, [inaudible 00:09:08].

Michael: All right, Rob, the first deal we're gonna talk about today of the two was PD.com.au. Again, that's Paul David, PD.com.au, a two-letter domain name. Who was the client and how did that client find you to even, you know, realize that you do domain brokerage?

Robert: Yeah, that first deal...you know how it happens? Sometimes your phone just rings, so you answer the phone. And it was a nice guy on the phone called Lee and he said, "I've heard you're a good domain broker in Australia." And I said, "Thank you." And he said, "Well, another insurance company recommended you there." It was iaai.com, but the Australian

version, the Australian branch. "And they've recommended you" because I did a name for them. And I said, "Well, that's great. What's going on here?"

And he said, "Well, we've got a bit of a problem. You know one of our guys five months ago reached out to the owner of PD.com.au and said, you know, 'Hi. I'm from Progressive Direct. We'd like to buy PD.com.au, please. This is the Australian branch.'" And you know, like you would if you owned the name, the owner of the name and the seller said, "Awesome! You know that's like \$150,000 or \$100,000" whatever he said. You know he seeks for a higher price. He knew he was going high at the start, like you would, like it's a perfect name for what we know as a worldwide big company.

Michael: Totally, yeah, Progressive, the insurance company, right? Is that what they do, insurance? Yeah.

Robert: Yeah. And so he said, "We don't have a budget for that even though, you know, we're a worldwide organization. We're the Australian branch. And we've got a budget of like \$20,000, \$25,000." So he said, "How...you know, can you do something? Can you help us with this? Like there's a big gap here and it's been five months so we're hoping you can go in."

And you know the first thing I said is, "Oh, man! I really wish you hadn't done that." Because even on my website, and I'm sure in a lot of domain brokerage websites, it says...that's why I reiterate, one of the first things is, "Please don't contract the current owner of the domain name because you're gonna jack the price up." If they know I come in and try and get it because as soon as there's two people involved being the person who's contacting them and then adding a broker, that's a market for the name. There's two people interested in and the price skyrockets.

Michael: Right. If the seller assumes that it's two separate people then they're gonna say, "Wow! Suddenly, everybody wants my name. I'm gonna increase the price." But if Progressive came to you and said, "Hey, Rob, we couldn't get anywhere with this guy. Now we want you to negotiate on our behalf." Why

wouldn't you just go to the seller and say I am now representing Progressive? There's only one buyer. Does that make sense to do for a broker?

Robert: It does actually. That's a bit of an angle that I think you've got to figure out how it's gonna go. In my case, I, because I had just got back from Vegas NamesCon, I met a couple of guys over there that were interested in investing in the Australian market. And there's ways to do that by opening up, by starting an application for a trademark in Australia. So when I did reach out to the owner of PD.com.au, there were...I had a couple of buyers who were looking at investing in two-letter .com.au. So because of that and because Progressive Direct had told me it had been five months, I thought I'm going to go at this as though I'd like to see a list of his names with prices, so not just PD.com.au, but because I'm working for my buyer here. So you know what I mean? So I said [inaudible 00:13:19].

Michael: Right. So you were trying to get him to give you a whole bunch of names and you're trying to get wholesale pricing not retail pricing because he already gave the retail price for PD.com.au - \$100,000, \$150,000.

Robert: That's why I was open with him to say, "You know it's me so I would like some friendly prices." But I'm not necessarily saying wholesale but I'm not saying go hard on retail. I just wanted some [inaudible 00:13:40] price. And also...

Michael: It can be something in between. You're not looking for a fire sale. Let's just...It's got to be something in between. Yeah.

Robert: Yeah. So basically he sent me four, five names and they were all...he kind of wanted to sell them as a package of four, five names. And that was not gonna work because I had an investor might have wanted one or two. And I knew I had PD as well. So in this case, that's how I went about it and he was too...

Michael: Yeah, that was smart.

Robert: Yeah. That's what I figured at that time. Another angle would have been to go at him and say, "Progressive have contacted me and they want to buy the name." But knowing this particular domainer, and he's a professional domainer and he does well and he owns a bunch of two-letter .com.au's, he probably would've...because he's not desperate to sell it, I know that. And so he probably would've just held out for, you know, 80,000, even 70,000 and kept staying, put it at 100,000. And I just knew he was never gonna sell it to them for that. So it was gonna be bad for him and they would never gonna buy it for that. So I chose, in this instance, to go about it that way.

Michael: Yeah. It was smart. Since you did have other interest and you just wanted to see what else he had. Maybe he would give you group pricing, you know, a bulk price. And maybe you'd get some more information out of him if you started more of a conversation around the different domains.

Robert: Yeah, I wanna get some prices, yeah.

Michael: And you get the discussion going. It's not just a single domain that you're going after. So that's...

Robert: That's right. And if there was...

Michael: ...very smart.

Robert: And if there was...yeah, thanks. And if there was one or two others that were reasonable prices like if said, "I really like this one. It's 20 grand." And one of my other investors might have snapped that up and I could've sold two names for him, so...

Michael: Yeah. And you could have bought them in bulk and then, you know, distribute the cost differential differently on the, you know, through your clients.

So let me ask you, PD.com.au, if it was PD.com, I would say phenomenal domain name, I can set some pricing. I don't know anything about the .com.au ccTLD market. How do you value a two-letter .com.au domain name?

Robert: Yeah. Luckily, I'm in a position where I would probably get the most inbounds on premium and brandable and short acronym names in Australia because I've got the...I think I'm representing the biggest...I'm representing about five portfolios. It's about 30,000 names. And I've been doing that for probably eight, nine months. So I'm saying this, I'm quite...I'm one of the guys kind of creating the pricing, to tell you the truth, in Australia because I'm getting phoned up by retail customers as well as other domainers.

And what I'm finding is with inbounds, what people are willing to pay for a two letter, I would say, the standard retail price is anywhere between 30K and 50K, for a two-letter .com.au, depends on...You know, PD is a good one but you know something like, you know, ZN.com.au, would be, you know, more like 15K or 20K. But something awesome like MY.com.au, you'd be looking at like 50 for something like MY or UP or something like that.

Michael: Interesting. Okay, so you know that mid to...

Robert: And I know it mean...

Michael: ...low to mid five figures is generally the price range, \$20,000, \$50,000, in there?

Robert: I mean, yeah, but if someone wanted it bad enough, I don't see why I couldn't reach \$100,000. And especially the market in the last 12 months, I've seen the market like, I deal with 10 to 15 inbounds a day for names in Australia. And the prices are just going up. They're just...people are willing to pay more and they're understanding the value of a name.

And there's another [inaudible 00:17:31] thing that's happening in Australia at the moment, I don't know if we'll talk about much in this interview, maybe

it's a separate thing, but the direct registration .au is apparently coming into being. So people are...Some people are backing off and saying, "Well, I'm not gonna buy .com.au until I know what's going on with the direct .au ccTLD." But some people are actually jumping in and saying, "I better get my hands on my name so I can have the .au when that comes out." So that's happening in our market right now as well.

Michael: Right. Why wouldn't the AU registry do the same as like UK and India is doing where, you know, they probably offer the shorter .au's to the current registrants of the .com.au domain names?

Robert: That's...policy is still being developed and that could be the case. Yeah, that's...I think it's a whole another article.

Michael: Because some people are waiting but you know precedence has been set, it would be weird for them to change. But there's risk. There's the risk of the unknown. Yeah.

Robert: They're at risk. And I think it was in the .nz, .co.nz. When that came into being, I don't think they gave that the first rights to the .co.nz. I think they just stay, opened it up to whoever owned the...any sort .nz had equal rights. So there's that model that apparently we, you know, we may go as well. So it's...

Michael: Yeah. But Australians hate New Zealand, why would you follow that model?

Robert: Aw, I don't know about that. I kinda...

Michael: Hey, Rob, on NameBio.com, I noticed there are only two or three two-letter .com.au domain names reported in any calendar year. Most are in the low to mid four figures, meaning like \$2,000, \$4,000, \$5,000. So what's the difference between what I see in NameBio.com and what you're seeing

through your, you know, backend managing these 30,000 premium domain names for your clients?

Robert: Yeah. I think it's funny with...the same with, like ST bot NameBio, all those sort of sites that are mostly U.S. based. For some reason, the .au, .com.au is not being taken too seriously and not reported regularly in those sorts of...so I know ST bot is a good towards the years in America and for .com's, yeah, even worldwide. But there's no real place we can go to value domain names like a website for Australian names. It's just...the algorithm is not there yet. So same with...and the...our drop platform, we have three drop platforms in Australia. Those sales don't seem to be reported either to NameBio or anything like that.

Michael: Interesting. What are the drop platforms that you have in Australia?

Robert: We have NetFleet. We have Drop, which is a good one, Drop.com.au, and we have my...one of my favorites is DomainShield.com.au. They are so different. Drop.com.au is a transparent platform. You can see what people are bidding and you can go up and above people. NetFleet is kind of a private, it's non-transparent. You don't know what anyone else is bidding. And DomainShield goes up in kind of increments. So it goes 25, 50, 100, 200, 400, 800, 1600, 3200. So it goes up in jumps. So if someone is sitting on 3200 and says you can't have it for 3200, you've got to jump to 6400 and you gotta double down on that platform. And, you know, sometimes I have to do that, a couple of times where you go, "That's a big jump. Should I maybe take my, you know, take a punt over on one of the other platforms and hope they..."

Yeah, there's only three at the moment. We actually...we need a fourth, definitely. And I've just been talking to a couple of international drop platform providers just to ask, to invite them to come to the Australian drop platform market because I think we need a bit more competition here. Yeah.

Michael: Awesome. All right. So you're managing a...so clearly ST bot is an algorithm. You need data to feed into the algorithm in order to get

valuations, order of magnitude valuations, estimates. You're saying they don't have enough data because clearly I'm not seeing any data. And these drop platforms aren't reporting the data automatically. I know you're reporting some of the sales, like I, you know, noticed these two domains were reported to DN Journal. And I think they're sucked into NameBio. I think I did notice those. But you're saying, in general, the domain name sales aren't being reported for the .com.au.

Robert: Yeah. I would say, you know, 90% of sales are not being reported and I would say, 70% of the names I'm doing, we're signing NDAs. People don't want other people to know. I don't really understand that, which is these two names didn't have any NDAs, obviously, but to me, like, for PD and for Fetch, they're such good names that I kind of...if I was the buyer or the, you know, the buyer of these names, I would want the figure to be on record so that it's the benchmark for if and when you ever want to sell these. It's like I'm not taking less than what I paid for it. So, yeah...

Michael: I agree. So the seller told Progressive Direct that it would be a hundred, you know, a six-figure name. Let's assume it's \$100,000. And you needed...they said their budget was \$20,000 to \$25,000. Let's call it \$25,000. How did you get to seller down from \$100,000 and how did you get the buyer up from \$25,000? How does that happen to come to like, I think the bigger one is probably like the seller. How did you get the seller down to \$42,000 from \$100,000?

Robert: Yeah. In this case, it came down to my network that I have built over the last couple of years, I'd have to say. Otherwise it would have not happened. The seller may never have sold the name and may never have gotten money for it. And the buyer, they would just probably gonna stick with...They did tell me this but it's hard to convince some...the seller of something that a buyer says without them, you know, being dubious, "Is this true or not?" But the buyer told me that, you know, they're gonna stick with progressiveonline.com.au if they can't get PD. Even though...can you imagine emailing them like lee@progressiveonline? It's too long.

Michael: Yeah. Or even worse, it's like robert.kaay@progressiveonline.com.au. You can't even fit that on a business card, can you?

Robert: Yeah, if it's a two-sided business card. It goes to the other side. Yeah, it's so prestigious for them to have like lee@PD.com.au. So I was talking them into it going, "You need this. You need to put a bit more money into this because..." And so I was explaining the power of it, you know, what we're just talking about and...Anyway, I was trying to get him up. So he was working on getting a bit more of a budget. And meanwhile, I was talking to...the guy's name's Sasha, who was selling the name. He's a great guy and he owns a bunch of names and he owned them for, you know, years and decades.

And what happened was, you know, this can happen, like as a broker, you're involved in deals and you know, maybe 8 out of 10 deals don't work because of this exact situation. The seller wants more and the buyer can't pay more. So in this case, I thought, I'm gonna have to get, bring in some help here.

So I got a mate of mine, Ned, who runs Domainer.com.au. I just was just bouncing stuff of him, just saying, "What do I do?" Like, Sasha's not getting any money for this name. And if he's gonna be too unrealistic...and all the rest of it. And I kind of I'm pretty sure I know what he paid for these names. So he's made a bunch of money on it. So you know, that being said, they're worth what they're worth, what you can get from it, especially if you find them for four or five years, of course the name's got four or five times in value in Australian, anyway.

So I was just bouncing off of my mate Ned from Domainer. He's a mutual friend of Sasha's and it's just by coincidence Sasha rang him up to get some advice as well. And he said, "I've been talking to Rob. Do you want me to...What do you want me to do?" And Sasha, the seller, actually invited Ned to be the mediator and said, "Well, maybe you can make Rob see sense to tell, talk his client into going up." And meanwhile I was saying, "Well, maybe

Sasha," to Ned, "can see sense to maybe come down a bit or he's gonna be holding on to this name for a 100 years because it's perfect for Progressive Direct. You don't know if another buyer is gonna come along in 10 years." And, anyway, so that was that.

Michael: So all three of you got on a phone call together?

Robert: No, we didn't because Sasha and I were getting a bit heated with each other. He was saying, "Come on, man, you gotta bring in a lot more money." And I was saying, "Seriously, there's not that much of a budget." And that sounds like a line from a broker but I was being truthful. But, so yeah, Ned worked with us for about...just you know would ring him, ring me and act as the intermediary for about a week for about a week. And it ended up just still not happening.

And I did end up getting Progressive to go up to 30 in that time. So they were coming to the party and that they thought I couldn't do it. And then they would to come into the party and so then this was going on for a couple of weeks and they're getting a little bit of heat from Progressive saying, "Can you do this for us? Oh, we thought you're a good domain broker." And I'm just feeling bad. And Sasha's like going, "No, I want more money."

And then we started playing a waiting, you know, the waiting game with each other. I'm not gonna call him for three days. I'm sure he's gonna come back and beg me for the money. And then he's not, and then I'm sweating. And then he...and I'm hoping he's thinking, "He doesn't care about the name anymore," and stuff like that. And then nothing's happening and so I just got so frustrated after three weeks. And normally, it doesn't...You know I can only close something in 48 hours and you see if it's gonna be realistic or if they're never gonna meet in the middle.

But I just reached out to another friend of ours called Aaron. And I just said, "I'm so frustrated that Sasha's gonna lose all these money." And he's...I've got my client, you know, up and he's not coming down and he's just saying, "No,

a hundred." You know every phone call, every 48 hours, a hundred, a hundred, a hundred. And so I said, "He's got to be a bit more realistic."

Anyway, he, Aaron, got involved and gave him a phone call, and he's a friend of his as well. So I mean the network, you know what I mean? It's...everyone getting in his ear and saying. "You're really gonna...Rob is not mucking around here. You're gonna lose this. He's not...In six months, he's not gonna come with a hundred. It's never gonna happen."

And so anyway, that pretty much did it. We actually got to phone each other again and said, "You know let's just do this, no dancing, on the phone right now." And we ended up settling at 35. So I even...Progressive came up another five. I had to talk them to come up another five. But then of course there's tax and then there's my fee so the end of it was 42,500.

Michael: So 35 is what Progressive Direct paid for the domain name? Or 42,500 is what Progressive...?

Robert: Yeah. Progressive Direct paid 42,500 for the name. Yeah, that's about.

Michael: You know I understand how corporate America or large corporations work, right? You got your main contact there who contacts you. He's in charge of the domain, go get it done. He had a budget set of 25,000, which his boss probably okayed and you know the whole marketing plan for the year is set up. We're gonna do this and we need this much of it can be the domain name. And then when you go back to them and say, "Well, you need to come up." And they're like, "Okay. Well, we're gonna wait until next week when we have our staff meeting and then we'll discuss it."

So you got the delay. And then they're gonna say, "Okay. We'll take 5,000 out of here and put it in here." And they don't understand how much domain names are worth or anything. And Lee is trying to like educate them based on what you've educated him on, probably. I assume Lee is a man. And so,

you know, going back and forth can be really painful in a corporate environment. I'm amazed that you even got them up to \$42,500. How does that happen?

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Michael: I'm amazed that you even got them up to \$42,500. How does that happen?

Robert: Yeah. Well, to them, I mean, we were dealing in X tax and X fees and that's what my contract, my broker sales agreement said. So they may even get another shock when they got the final invoice of 42,500. But because we're dealing in X tax and X fees, so we were jumping from 25 to 30 to 35. And then I said that I did that for 35, you know, X tax and X fees. And then the accountant must have seen it and said, "I thought it was, you know, I thought we were on at 30 here. It's 42,500."

But it is what it is, you know. And I think, honestly, I mean, if they closed up shop tomorrow, I can get them 50,000 for that name. Like, it's a good investment. And that being said, you know, but meanwhile Sasha could have held on to that name for 10 years and not got 15,000 for it. So I think it worked out good for everyone.

Michael: Yeah, sort of the time value of money. Exactly. So my question is how did you get Progressive Direct to come up to \$35,000? So basically they said 20 to 25 and then you talked them up to 30, then you talked them up to 35. What goes into a conversation every single time you need to try and get a client to come up in their budget?

Robert: Just the power of it, over two letter, and the investment. And often, I'm sure a lot of us do, we compare domain names as assets to, you know, physical assets like real estate, like land real estate or cars. You can't really...Honestly, how are you gonna lose your money? I don't...I've never heard of, you know, I've just haven't heard of someone buying a name for a bunch of money and then selling it for less, like, you know I'm taking about a good brandable or two- or three-letter name. I just talk them into it. It's a no brainer. You can almost guarantee it, you know. I can guarantee it.

Michael: Well, if you wait long enough, right?

Robert: Yeah, if you wait long enough, I mean, it's an investment on their...it's an asset on their books as well, like, you know?

Michael: Yeah, definitely. You know I just did a work out this morning. One of my friends used to play in the NBA and he's now a big pinball fanatic and he ranked in the world and all that sort of stuff. He was telling me about the Las Vegas Hall of Fame. There's this pinball machine that there's only two of them left in the world of this really old pinball machine. And I'm like, how much is a pinball machine worth when there's only two left in the world above it? And he's like, "Yeah."

Robert: [Inaudible 00:33:29]

Michael: He's been offered \$50,000 for that pinball machine. So I'm like, there's the equivalent, like PD.com.au. There's only one of those in the world. And there's two of these pinball machines and they're the same order of magnitude. And so, yeah, you know, and I'm like...

Robert: That's good analogy, yeah.

Michael: ...one person is only offered \$50,000 but there's probably more like that in similar...in this domain name. So yeah, I think it is a good analogy to look at in that. Plus they get the other benefits that you mentioned, like the shorter domain name, the easier to type in, you don't have mistypes, that fits on a card, you know, on a business card.

I just noticed my video froze up. Am I frozen or I'm still moving for you?

Robert: Yeah. You're frozen on my end, yeah.

Michael: Okay. Let me just stop that and return it back on here. Okay. Is that good?

Robert: Yeah.

Michael: Okay. Cool. Okay and so on the seller side, Sasha, whom I don't know but I'd like to meet. You got him down from 100,000 to 42,500 and it was basically, you know, using your network of trusted peers. So it wasn't just you saying, "Here's an offer today. I'll give you half of what you want but it's cash today versus if you were to hold that for another 10 years. What's gonna happen?" And, you know, he's gonna want to retire. I don't know if he has kids and he wants to pass this portfolio onto his kids or if he's gonna need to sell 'em at some point. You know everybody has their own requirements in life. And so, you know, 42,500 is a good offer on a two-letter domain name.

Robert: Yeah. And he's got a bunch of them so you'd think...I'd say, you know, he's got like 15 of them. So he's doing well. But, I mean, you'd want to sell one every so often.

Michael: Yeah. I think a lot of people get tied up like if it's not setting the high benchmark for the two-letter .com.au, am I doing a misservice to the rest of my portfolio? You know, maybe it was one of his better two letters. I don't know.

Yeah. All right. So your personal network came into play because you were able to leverage them to, you know, and you're not getting them do anything that they didn't believe in. But they were saying the exact same thing that you were, hearing it for more than one person, from people you trust, it will make you think differently. So that was a great tactic to potentially use. And I think...

Robert: Yeah. I'm sorry. I should mention one more thing. I did have to reduce my fee to help it go through. And both Aaron and Ned, I said, "You guys are entitled to a portion of my fee if you guys are gonna help this." And they both turned it down, which I thought was admirable as well. They just wanted it to be good for everyone.

Because I was representing the buyer and Sasha was selling it, I don't think there would ever be a point where he 100% trusted me that I was...that they really didn't have a budget of 80K, you know. So it was our mutual trusted friends in the network that brought him to see, "This is pretty much the most amount of money I'm gonna get for this." So a network is important, obviously.

Michael: Yeah. And I don't know what they said to Sasha but clearly you were on the right order of magnitude, right? Like we're all looking for the grand slam where you get way more than what you think the current market is. And

you're saying that you're getting retail offers in the \$40,000-\$50,000 range, but you know a \$100,000, double that, I look at that as a homerun, right?

And so you brought a very, you know, satisfactory offer. It may not be the highest one, \$70,000 would have been great. He doesn't know how much your client has. So you know it's a tough situation to be in and that's where, you know, having an earnest conversation and leveraging your network and using, you know one of the points that you made, was just reaching out to your colleagues, your peers, and saying, "What do you think I should do in this case?" or "Do you think it's too low or do you think it's too high?" and getting their feedback. We all do that.

Robert: Yeah. I guess those two guys were acting as referees that I was being legitimate. And I guess that happens in normal business. People reach out to referees to see if people are legitimate.

Michael: Yeah, totally. I just had a peer reach out to me and ask me about some of these brokered services in the industry of somebody that I've had on the show before, in private. You know he wants to know is this guy really legit. And so you know I was able to make that third party assessment.

So how long did the deal take to close from you reaching out, not Progressive Direct five months earlier, but from you until you've got your commission check in the mail? How long did that take?

Robert: It was about three and a half weeks. That was a long one, yeah.

Michael: Three and a half weeks? That's not very long.

Robert: For me that's long. I don't know. I don't like waiting. So I try and do things in a week. And that's what I did with Fetch that we'll talk about. That was from Friday to Friday. And that's how I like to roll. Yeah.

Michael: Wow! So let's talk about that. The second deal of the two was Fetch.com.au. How did the seller find you in this case?

Robert: I think the seller started to hear about me selling these names and maybe even heard about PD. And I've been writing some blog articles on different Australian blog sites, and most notably Domainer.com.au, and I think he just could see I was buying and selling names and he wanted to give it a crack. And actually, Ned from Domainer.com.au probably he did, he recommended to Ian, who owned Fetch.com.au.

Michael: Excellent. So clearly he was doing some searching, found Ned's blog, Domainer.com.au, reached out to Ned and said, "Who would you recommend that I use to...?"

Robert: And now I'm thinking about the start of it. I think he may even reached out to Ned to sell the name. And Ned's getting...going into...he keeps saying he's retiring from domaining but I don't know how he can and I don't think he is. He just keeps saying it. Because it's so much fun, why would you want to retire, you know? But, so, I think he said, "You know, I'm not doing it anymore but you should...you know Rob's doing that sort of stuff." So, yeah, I think that's how that happened.

Michael: Got you. So the seller named Ian came to you and you told him how you worked. What was your typical commission that you charge to somebody to represent their sale?

Robert: My typical commission is 20%. And that's talking about both of these deals. I'm really interested in getting across why is the domainer worth the fees. Like why is a domainer worth 20% and hopefully through these two deals, people can see why.

Michael: Yeah. And so when he came to you, as a broker, do you typically say, "Here's what I think the value is and here's what I'm gonna try and get."? Or do you ask them sort of what their minimum is that you need to get over and

then sort of align that with what you think you can get and whether it's realistic or not? How does that typically work?

Robert: Yeah. I like to first understand how much they would like for the name, and especially if someone has been sitting on something for, you know, a decade or 15 years. They obviously think it's worth something. And they're holding on to it like stock or like super annuation where they hope one day it's gonna pay off. They've been paying the renewal fees and you don't know how much they paid for it at the start. And yeah, if they wanna sell it, then they want some money for it.

So I always ask. And he said, "You know, I have a couple of debts, that we all do sometimes." And he says, "You know, if you got me 50, I could pay for my debts and I'd have some money and that'd be great."

Michael: All right. And so you said \$50,000 for Fetch.com. Was that a good deal or not? Like, how do you value...what do you go through to value a brandable like Fetch.com.au. What's your process?

Robert: I have to pretty much rely on myself and my inbounds because you know there's nothing really out there for Australian .com.au names to compare really. There's the drop market, which you can't compare, you know, end user retail prices. And especially, see, Fetch was never gonna be dropped ever. He was never gonna drop. Like some names aren't gonna be dropped so they're worth what they're worth. So I could just go buy other one-named brandables I'd sold. And I think the best names to sell, I'm sure you'll agree, are one-word brandables or two- or three-letter acronyms. So I have only been selling a bunch of those over the past 18 months, especially last 12 months.

So I would say if someone literally, and I do get phone calls every day from end user saying, "I'm thinking about buying this one word, do you have any idea on price?" And I say end user retail price that a name is never gonna drop, I say to them \$20,000, give or take 10 or 20, give or take 10 grand, you

know? But between 10 grand and 50 grand for an Australian one-word brandable is absolutely normal. And now that's what we're selling them for at the moment, five figures for a one-word brandable. I mean I know it's whole new story in America.

Michael: So 10,000 to 50,000 for a one-word brandable based on the data that you're seeing coming in. And then the seller, Ian, says, "I need at least \$50,000 for it." You're like...do you think that that was on the high end of...?

Robert: I did. I did think it was on the high end but I thought it was possible. And as soon as he mentioned a few names he owns. And he owns some good ones. He's probably got a, you know, a bunch more like as good as this that he's told me about that. That I'm gonna work on next. But especially he likes me for this.

And so one thing, it just, you know, sometimes things...I don't know I've got this analogy that I use or this kind of creed that I use called...In business terms, when things happen, it comes down to three things: talent, luck and timing. When he said, "Can you sell Fetch for 50,000?" I thought, I think I've got the talent, which is, you know, the skills and the knowledge to do this. In terms of the luck, sometimes you want wanna be lucky. In terms of selling Fetch, luck could've been this couple of people that are wanting the name. You know that's just lucky.

In terms of timing, I've been going at shopping centers over the last couple of weekends with my sons, my two little boys, and my wife. And I was noticing we have, you know, our telco networks here are Telstra and Optus and Virgin, a bit different than the U.S. And in a lot of these telco stores, it would be, I'd see these signs saying Optus with Fetch, Virgin with Fetch, iiNet with Fetch. And always, I kept thinking, isn't...so that Fetch TV is a streaming service but why are they saying with Fetch not Fetch TV? So I was actually noticing their brand was just, you know, a couple of weeks earlier, just walking around shopping centers and on television that their brand is getting turned into Fetch even though they're FetchTV.com.au.

So as soon as Ian mentioned, "I've got this name Fetch," the timing was perfect for me to say, to think, "Well, I know who could use that. The Fetch TV could use that because everyone is out there promoting them as Fetch anyway." And then when he said, "And by the way, I think I've got a buyer already fetched someone that's reaching out." And I thought he's gonna say it, the Fetch TV people because that was what was going through my mind.

And he said, "It's Macquarie Bank." They've just started a Fetch trademark in the...they've just registered a trademark in Australia. Yes, so that's actually how he said, "Can you sell Fetch? I want 50 grand. And I've got a lead. I think Macquarie Bank may be interested." But I was thinking straight away in terms of timing, I think the streaming Fetch TV service might be interested. So, yeah...

Michael: And if I go to trademark247.com and I type in Fetch, there's a ton of companies that have a trademark for Fetch and maybe they'd have...that's U.S. based, maybe they'd have aspirations to expand in Australia. I don't even know how to search for trademarks in Australia. But if you go search there, I'm sure there are tens of trademarks as well, right?

Robert: Yeah. We do a...it's an IP trademark, government website in Australia that we use. And that's one of the first things I did. You know as a broker, when you're luck...because I was selling in this case, so you've got to reach out to as many people as you can. And that's where the name can actually, you know, drive up and become something valuable, which is what happened in this case.

I did search IP Australia for trademarks and there were 79 registered trademarks for the word fetch. I mean some of them were starting to drop off but I thought, "Yeah," I thought, "Yeah, I'm gonna take this on." I'm gonna, I reckon, we can go with this. There's a lot...It's such a great, I mean, fetch, you can't mess it up, you know. Some of these words are you know...

Michael: Right. So you've got this enormous funnel, right? You've got like tens of companies potentially that could want it, including the bank and Fetch TV. What do you do? Do you like to reach out? Do you organize your spreadsheet and/or your contact list and get everybody and then reach out to everybody at once? Or do you go like one at a time and say you know if you get a lead and sell it quickly via the first outreach, then all the better? How do you work that typically?

Robert: Yeah, myself, giving away a few of my secrets here. I guess it's not rocket science though but I do do like a spreadsheet. I use three different methods to harvest the potential clients. I've got some bot software that I'll type in keywords of people that I think might interested in. And that pulls random stuff that I don't even think of. So I put that in the spreadsheet.

I go do a trademark search. I found the 79 fetch trademark. Put that in spreadsheet. You know you hop on Google and you start typing in fetch business, fetch Australia, stuff like that. You put them in a thing. And then you find out all the email addresses in it. I start off with a client email and very targeted because you don't want to be spamming anyone. And follow that up couple of days later, if people haven't rejected the email, with a phone call. So you know there's a lot of this time and effort that goes into this stuff. I'm sure a lot of people do it like that.

Michael: And are you doing it only to Australian located businesses, primarily?

Robert: Mostly, but it was interesting, there was a big U.S. company that I saw that had a Fetch pending trademark in Australia. And they were a pet company and they were bringing in this kind of this dog kind of app software with their own hardware that they're trying to trademark to call Fetch. So I had actually sent them an email and they wrote back saying, "You know we'd like to find out some more information." And I sent it to them, something back, and I didn't hear anything. But I had a few players.

Michael: Yeah, a few besides just local. And so your initial email, is that typically to a CEO or chief marketing officer? Who do you like to target on your first emails?

Robert: Yeah. You can use LinkedIn for this stuff as well. That sometimes helps. Yeah, I mean, in this case, we'll get to in a minute, I dealt with the CEO of...I think that's why they paid within 24 hours because you know how these are like, normally. Yeah, okay, and I've dealt with other like insurance companies and banks where it's like, "Okay. I've got you the name." And then like, "Okay, then we're gonna raise an invoice and we'll pay you in 30 days." And I'm saying, "Hang on a minute. I don't think the seller is gonna wait 30 days. I mean the name could be worth double by that time."

Well like yeah, and so CEOs, business development managers, sometimes, you know, the IT managers, the ICT managers, the design people, I just go for different in management roles and then...because you'll never know. A CEO could get it and just go delete, delete, delete. But then if their web-design people or their creative section or the, I don't know, the business development manager, if someone else gets in their ear...

And that's another thing that I learned from my band days, the way to get your band remembered is we have this three-point of contact for where someone will hear your song in the radio, let's see, a poster on a light pole, and then they'd see, they'd read about you in the street press or something like that. And so there was...I don't know how we came up with this concept but if there were three different points of contact for your band, back in my 20s, people would think, "This band's popular. I have to go and see them because I've heard them on...I've seen their logo on a street pole and I've read about them in a little street press rack."

So the same thing here, even though the CEO might have deleted it, he hopefully, he saw Fetch.com.au. It's sitting in his head. And he's like, "That's not very important." Then if he's a, you know, a business development manager, he comes and goes, "Did you see that email about...?" So he's

getting, you know, two or three. And if someone else in the company mentions in a board meeting, "Did anyone see that..?" That's the three points of contact and then he might start to go, "Well, hang on. Maybe there's something in this, you know."

Michael: So it sounds like you email each person individually. You don't group like the CEO, the chief marketing officer and somebody else. They're all getting individual emails.

Robert: Yes, individual emails, no carbon copies.

Michael: Yup. And does that first email...

Robert: And it's good for spam-filtering so...

Michael: Is the first email just really like, "Hello, Mike. I'm a domain name broker representing the sale of Fetch.com.au. Please let me know if you have any interest in learning more about acquiring this domain. Sincerely, Rob."?

Robert: Pretty much. You know if you put too much information in trying to oversell it, they think there's something fishy is going on. I try and, yeah, keep it to two, three sentences and you know hopefully they, you know, know and our brand and desire. And of course, in the signature, you keep that short as well. But if they think...because the first thing they think is, "Is this legitimate, am I gonna give someone money, and does this gonna run away?" So hopefully they check your website and then your website is legitimate and they can see past sales and stuff like that.

Michael: Yeah, exactly. And so, "Yes, it's great. No, it's fine" because at least then you know. And then you follow up with phone call for anybody that doesn't reply yes or no?

Robert: Yeah. You have to do that as well. Sometimes, you know, they don't like it. But the way I see it, I'm doing them a favor while letting them know

these names here. And some of them, some people still don't get it especially Australia is a little bit behind with domain names still. We're still...a lot of businesses are still being educated on that. So they don't understand that if they don't take this opportunity. It's fair enough that if they don't want to pay the money but if they don't, they may not ever get the opportunity again. If in two years...

Michael: Do you put that in the email or does that sound too salesy?

Robert: That sounds too salesy in the first email but I'll tell them that on the phone. If they ask for more information, then I'll, you know, write a few powerhouse back.

Michael: Yeah. That makes sense because you want them to realize that, right? And some people just don't realize it.

Robert: Yeah. They don't. And it's...Sometimes, yeah, it's not about me making my commission all the time, like, I want to have everyone the best name that they can possibly have. Someday I do that with a \$50,000 name or I do that with a \$2,000 name, where, you know, I'm making a couple of hundred bucks. Like, you just want to fit the right people with the right name.

Michael: Yeah. All right, so you gathered all your information, you sent out all the emails, and Fetch TV wrote you back and said, "Yes, we're interested." How do that progress?

Robert: Yeah. When I started reaching out to all the possible interested parties to buy Fetch, Ian, the seller, apart from the Macquarie Bank lead, he said, "Actually, Fetch...I've just gone through my emails and Fetch TV did reach out to me two years ago. And I found their email." And I said, you know, "Are you interested in selling?" And he goes, "I wasn't interested. You know, I always...the cash was flowing, I didn't have...I didn't want to sell it. I was gonna hold on to it."

So it goes, so anyway, he's this lead from them. I already have them in my spreadsheet and I was gonna target them. So I added that. It was actually a legal counsel for Fetch TV that he had in his...So I reached out to him but that person, obviously, didn't work there anymore, But luckily for me, someone else picked it up in the company as well as my other couple of emails I've sent to other people in the company. And, yeah, a new legal counsel reached out the day after I've done all these email targeting.

There were a few people that came back but they were...they seem to be the keenest. And they said, "You know, we want to make sure this is legitimate. And do you have any references?" So I actually had to give them some references from big companies that I sold names for before and I'm not sure if they rang them up or not, but you know they liked to find out that you've done this before.

Michael: Yeah. They want to do their due diligence just to make sure you're legitimate. Sure.

Robert: Yeah and they want to make sure that the seller didn't just register this name to sell it to them and wasn't doing in bad faith and stuff like that. And they want to talk to him to make sure he gave me permission to represent him, so...

Michael: Interesting. That's great due diligence.

Robert: That's what I thought. But, yeah, they were...and I could tell they were serious then, and good on them. And I thought in my mind you need to be serious because out there, you're known as Fetch, so you need Fetch like people know this Fetch TV. So, yeah, they rang him up and he said, "Rob's dealing with it. Deal with Rob." And so that was good.

Michael: So how did...Did they say how much is it? How did you move from, like, they verified you to discussing pricing?

Robert: Yeah. Once it got to that stage, they emailed me and said, "We want to have a...like you and me are doing now. We want to have a boardroom meeting. And the CEO wants to talk to this directly with you." And I thought, okay, this is...he's into this, you know. It doesn't happen all the time. And so I spoke with my client just before I made the boardroom meeting. And you know we reiterated that he wanted minimum of 50. But now that there were more people involved in it, he wanted it to go, obviously, to the person who was willing the best price for it.

So I went into...we've all got our different tactics on and game plans on how to do this, Mike. Before I made the call, I stand in, I'm in my boardroom now for five minutes. And I thought, "How am I gonna do this?" And I decided I was just gonna keep my mouth closed. And not say a price and let them do all the talking. And some, obviously, you can tell that I can talk when I wanna talk. I was actually just sitting back and kind of listening to them and getting a feel for it.

So we did the meeting and I spoke to the CEO, I forget his name now. But he was really a nice guy. He was actually an American guy. And he told me on the phone, I'm sure he wouldn't mind me saying this, but he worked for a big music magazine in America and they bought a really good name and that he was involved in. And so he understood the power of a good name. And I could tell.

And I just basically told him the facts that Macquarie Bank were interested in the name. There was also this American company interested in the name...

Michael: And a ton of other companies that you've reached out to that probably haven't been organized...

Robert: People I haven't...

Michael: ...enough to respond back. And so...

Robert: Yeah. Yes, so I've just said...

Michael: You are just starting the process of going out to the market.

Robert: Yeah, It's in play. And you know, I knew in my head that opening offer is 50, so I mean I'm not gonna accept...If he won't take 50 now, we're not gonna accept that. I didn't tell him any of this. I was just saying, he asked me my opinion on it, and I had deliberately have made...sometimes you wanna say the price but I deliberately made my mind up that I wasn't ever gonna say a price first in this case because, you know, I had the name, we had the name. And there was a market where it was starting...

And again, for some...I'm built like this with my brain about my band's days because we use to say in music and when we write our TP of building a buzz, building a buzz about the band. You know how you just start hearing about this band everywhere when you're younger and you go, "I got to go see this band. Everyone's talking about them." The name was getting a buzz...and it was just getting, you know, there was some attraction happening with it.

So I just kind of kept my mouth closed, and except telling him that there's a couple of buyers interested. We're now gonna shop it around. It's now gonna go up. And then he said, "Well, how much do you want for it?" And I said, "We're taking offers. What we're doing is we're taking offers." And he said, "Well, how much should I offer because, you know, if we were to make a legitimate name...?"

And he did try and, which is fair enough, he did try and water down any part...other. He said, "Macquarie Bank, they're not gonna pay that much for it. I know the guys in Macquarie Bank and if they buy, I'm just gonna get them to give it to me." And he actually said that. "And this American company, and I think they're not gonna care about a .com.au." And which is good on him like he's trying to buy the name, he should be playing it back.

But my response to him was, "You know, I think it's gonna go that way. And that's not my problem. Like if we sell it to Macquarie and you want to get it off them, that's fine. I just want the best price for my client and make sure it gets to the right home." So you know we're playing with each other back and forward.

And he goes, "Okay, I don't...if I don't want to mess around. I don't want you to market with all these people. I'm gonna make a serious offer. So what should I make?" And I said, "If you don't wanna dance around, if you don't want me to, you know, to keep talking to these other and ringing up these other people, and the name is hot right now, I would be looking at six figures, if you just wanna shut it down and you don't want to dance. If you wanna dance around, come in at \$50,000 and I'll market around for two weeks trying to get the price up." So I never set a price.

So he goes, "Okay. I'm gonna make you an offer. I'm not dancing. I'm not joking around. You need to listen to me. I'm gonna make an effort and if you don't take it, we're out." And I did take him seriously. And if someone says that, you want them to be serious.

And two hours later, my email came in and it said, "We would like to buy name for \$120,000." So that's, you know, XX GST and so it came in at \$132,000. And I respected the guy for doing that because he said I don't wanna dance around. And he invented the price. That's how much the name was worth to them. And so I was thankful in that situation. I hadn't mentioned the price because if I said, "You know my client wants 50 but we can shop it around. So if you do 80..." You know what I mean?

Michael: Right. You totally would've lowered the price that he gave you. Yeah.

Robert: Yeah. So I played it well, luckily, and in that...and I guess it comes from experience in doing it. And you know that was an amazing offer and if they were the only people interested in it and he hadn't made the offer, maybe we would've done it for 50, but I think they got a great deal. I think

they'd paid a great price for it. And literally 24 hours after they'd paid for the name, they sent out a press release to the major media in Australia saying they were now rebranding and spending \$10,000,000 on rebranding Fetch.

And yeah, so it's obviously, \$132,000 in their \$10,000,000 is a drop in the ocean for an amazing brand that they're gonna be...that they're looking at being the biggest TV streaming service in Australia, other than the big American ones like, you know, Netflix and stuff like that. But it looks like Fetch is going after Netflix in Australia. So they need the best possible name. I think that he did well and I rang my client straight up. "Ian," I said, "these guys are amazing. They respect us. They don't want us to dance around. They've made a realistic powerful offer for an Australian domain name. What do you wanna do?"

And the first thing he said, and you got to love it, is, "Do you reckon we can get a bit more because it's the opening offer?" And I said, "Well, I should explain to you..."

Michael: Yeah, how it was presented...

Robert: ...that we had an agreement, you know, a verbal agreement that we weren't gonna dance around." And people say that and they dance around and it's frustrating. But he didn't dance around. He was a man of his word. So I said, "It's up to you but you know he can get offended and then it could..." Normally, on an opening offer, I am gonna try for a bit more, you know, if it's not realistic. And we may shop it around to other people.

And I said, "I think it's a very generous and very realistic offer." And it is, if not now, then in a couple of years, one-word domain name, one-word brandable .com's.au's or .au's are gonna be worth six figures anyway. So he's maybe just a little bit early. So I would take it, like...And he said, "Hey, yeah, I'm gonna take it."

Michael: Yeah. It's a good price today. You said, you know, early in the conversation, \$10,000 to \$50,000 for a one-word .com.au clearly fetches better than a lot of other words because there are so many companies using that brand already, especially this one if they have aspirations to become the Netflix of Australia. So, yeah, maybe you could have gotten more, maybe you could have finessed them to a few more dollars, but is it worth risking the relationship and souring the deal and not getting that deal? You know you're client got his money a lot faster. He got more than double what he wanted for the domain name and so...

Robert: Yeah. He cleared a 100K like from a name that he's had for 15 years. And let's face it, I mean, he probably got the name for under 500 bucks. But I mean that's 15 years ago. And people don't understand the difference in...some people in the retail business industry in Australia, I always...I'm sure a lot of us do, as brokers and domainers. You know, in 1980s, in 1975, you can buy a block of land around Perth for you know \$25,000. Now that same block of land is worth \$600,000. So it's the same with names. After, you know, 5 years, 10 years, they're worth a bunch of money.

Michael: Exactly. But there isn't a, you know, a place where you can go, a multiple-listing service. In the U.S., you probably have something equivalent in Australia where all of the sale prices are disclosed. In domain names, you unfortunately just don't have that and especially when you know a lot of the data...

So were you ever as a broker of a domain name that did have tens of companies that had trademarks on it and clearly you're reaching out to those companies because they may want the domain name that matches their trademark, did it ever worry you that a UDRP-like complaint would be filed and somebody would try to get the domain name without buying it?

Robert: Not really, no. In Australia, we have, with domain names, we have...our policy rules are you're allowed to own a domain name if you have a close and substantial connections to the name. And they...Fetch, obviously,

clearly have a close and substantial connection, it's part of their name and they're rebranding to it. So I don't see how anyone could go, could get them get them off, you know.

Michael: Yeah. Okay. Cool. And how long did it take...

Robert: And I do check that, yeah.

Michael: Say it again.

Robert: I do check that sort of stuff. You know I get phone calls where people say, "I own this name." And if it's anything that's bad faith or trademark that's not generic, brandable or geographic, then I won't take it on, if it's risky and bad faith. Yeah.

Michael: Yeah, definitely. And so how long did this deal take from the time that Ian agreed to bring you on as a broker until you received your commission? How long did that take?

Robert: It was super fast. He rang me on a Friday morning and it was the following Friday morning that we...that I had this...yeah, I know, the CEO meeting and...

Michael: That's crazy fast.

Robert: I know and that was great. And part of the deal of the "no dancing" kind of deal we had was he was gonna make an unreal offer and he did. And our response was, "Well, you're gonna pay in 24 hours." And I was amazed at that because you know the CEO decided, "We're paying this in 24 hours." Like I explained before, some companies take 30 days and that has happened to me before and I've learned a lesson regarding that.

But and then within 24 hours of being paid, and he paid in, direct in, did the invoice, and then within 24 hours of that, I sent my invoice and I was paid. It was like, "Bam! Dusted."

Michael: Nice.

Robert: Yeah. You love it when it's like that.

Michael: So for individual investors living in Australia or Spain or the UK, do you have any advice for them on what type of investments they should make in their own ccTLD market?

Robert: Definitely, across every ccTLD market, you know, one-word brandables and two-letter and three-letter acronyms are the best way to go. I made so many mistakes when I was starting two and a half years ago, of thinking like, you know, melbourneplumbingsupplies.com.au was gonna be, you know, worth a lot of money. And anything that's like two or three words with like a city rather than like a whole country, you water down what it's worth.

Michael: So what about...So brandables and two- and three-letter .com's make sense. What about keyword domains like attorney.com.au or plumber.com.au? Are keyword domains good?

Robert: Oh, definitely, yeah, and keyword domains as well. Yeah, they're amazing especially if you're gonna SEO them and Google AdWords them. You know if people are typing...because I do represent lawyers.com.au and diamonds.com.au. They've got high price tags. But if someone develops diamonds.com.au in Australia and you know AdWords that...if someone's typing in engagement ring, diamond ring, friendship ring, whatever and the thing diamonds.com.au are the top of Google Search. You think you're gonna get a lot of traffic. It's powerful, yeah.

Michael: So knowing how important your personal network was to getting both of these deals done. You know getting them to begin with and getting them done. What advice do you have for investors or brokers that are in other countries to build their own personal networks?

Robert: It'd be...I'm not sure how it works in other countries. I guess it'd be...to build my network, I've become a part of like the local domaining industry online. We have a place called DNTrade.com.au where we all talk. That's in terms of wholesale kind of drop industry, getting into the industry and learning the ins and outs. And we have Domainer.com.au as well.

I guess it's about developing your website and start...and just making some smaller sales and becoming...because a lot of it's referral like how the PD guys got in touch with me, how the Fetch guy...the Fetch guys got in touch with me through the wholesale kind of domainer industry, from my reputation there. And the PD guys got in touch with me for making a sale for another insurance company. They found me on my website.

So you know there's the two. I'm networking in the end user retail side with my website and selling names and getting referrals. And then, you know, by representing the sellers, I'm in the wholesale kind of network, yeah. So it's getting into all of those networks.

Michael: Yeah. And just continuing to work day in and day out because you know now this Fetch.com.au company, when that CEO moves on to another company of they need a new domain name or launch this new product and they need a domain name, who are they gonna call? You, of course! So...

Robert: Yeah. And you [inaudible 01:12:34] that everyone that sat around that boardroom when we had a meeting, I mean, they might move on to other companies. I'm sure they've got colleagues in other companies that, you know, we need to get these name and they'll say, "Well, you know this guy did this Fetch deal for us." So yeah that's how it works, isn't it?

Michael: Yeah, fantastic, Rob. All right. If you've listened to the show and you have questions that I didn't ask and Rob didn't answer, please post them in the comments below this video in DomainSherpa and I'll ask Rob to comeback and answer as many as he can.

If someone wants to contact you directly, Rob, maybe they wanna ask you for valuations of a .com.au they own or chat with you about brokerage, what's the best way for them to contact you?

Robert: Yeah, visiting my website, which is DBR.com.au. That's the best way.

Michael: Awesome. And use the contact form on there, I guess?

Robert: Yeah. There's email and there's an Australian phone number if they're really keen, from international phone.

Michael: Awesome. All right, if you're watching and you found this show educational, you found benefit from this, learn something new, were inspired by Rob, please take 10 seconds and post a comment below this video. Write a comment on iTunes or send Rob a tweet @robkaay, R-O-B-K-A-A-Y. Robert Kaay, thank you for coming on DomainSherpa sharing your brokerage lessons learned and thanks for being a Domain Sherpa for others.

Robert: Thanks a lot for having me, Michael.

Michael: Thank you all for watching. We'll see you next time.